The Logger's Bark
RADIO CLUB of TACOMA

Spring 2012 | Volume 8, Issue 3 | Copyright RCT

From the Editor

Greetings from the new Logger's Bark editor. My name's Mike (the letters MWF in my call are my initials) and I've been a member of the club for about a year. I've had the privilege of being a member of the Code Ninja group so you may have heard my trembling fist keying W7MWF. I try to make it to the clubhouse most Saturdays, and have participated in FYBO, the Georgia QSO Party, and the Rookie Roundup.

I'm looking forward to the opportunity to help the club by taking over the Bark duties from Gary WG7X. A hearty round of applause is due him for his tireless efforts over the past seven years in publishing this newsletter. Bravo!

Because of the logistics of the transition from Gary to me, we're combining the March and April issues into this single "Spring 2012" production. This issue is going to be chock-full of administrative items since we've got some catch-up work to do publishing the minutes. I'm looking forward to your critiques, suggestions, and comments, and invite each of you to submit ideas, articles, stories, and photos to me for inclusion in future issues of The Logger's Bark.

Thanks and 73
Mike W7MWF

Late-Breaking Bulletins and News Items will be found on Page 14

General Meeting
22 February 2012 MINUTES

The 22 February General Membership meeting was held at the Pierce County Library Administration Building. . President Gary McAdams called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Officers and board members present:

President	Gary McAdams WG7X
Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Treasurer	Bob Purdom AD7LJ
Board	Al Ferguson -N7OMS
Board	Glen Galati KA7BOJ

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes. There were 37 names on the attendance roster.

Pledge of Alliegence: Was led by Vice President Casey WY7V.

Introductions: Self introductions were completed and several visitors and guests were warmly welcomed.

Illness or Silent Key: Peter Baker AD7EU's Mother returned to hospital.

Correspondence: Larry KD4VOM reported the usual correspondence;

Utility and Phone Bills
QSL Cards
Salmon Run Award
Property Insurance renewal
Property Tax bill
Membership Renewals
Bank Statements

Treasurer:

Committee Reports:

Training: Larry KD4VOM reports Stephen Morton AD7AB's next class is 10/11 March. Information and contact through the W7DK.org website.

Announcements:

Mike and Key Hamfest: Larry KD4VOM reminded all of the upcoming Mike and Key Hamfest on March 10th at the Puyallup fairgrounds. We need four or five to help hand out RCT Hamfest flyers, around 8:45/9 am at the gate…

Frank AC7JY solicited donations and items for sale at the RCT table at the Mike and Key Hamfest

RCT Emergency Operations Plan: Larry KD4VOM reports that the long dormant Emergency Operations Plan has been coordinated and revised

and is expected to be adopted at the March Board meeting. Next step will be an all hands meeting to present the plan, solicit participation and begin implementing the plan.

Gray's Harbor ARC HAM Days: Coming up February 25th at Elma. Several seminar sessions and a Swapmeet are planned, no admission.

Microsoft's MicroHams Digital Conference: Coming up 31 March, $ 25.00 preregistered, $ 30 at the door.

Program: Frank AD7JY presented a Ham's in Space Video

Show and Tell: Bill AD7QI brought back his NE2 bulb "Christmas tree light" set which has been running continuously since last year at the same time.

Tuning and Traffic: KR7W reported on the CW class on air contacts and progress.

Lynn WR7G reports good Japan activity on 15 meters 7J7 call which is for an American citizen living in Japan, W7XTZ has worked him too.

Hints and Kinks: None

Door Prizes: Yeasu Hat was won by Thane -- KF7TPA and a 24 clock won by Al -- N7OMS

Raffl Prize: Scanner antenna was won by W7XTZ

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Bob KE7WPK pounding the brass under the watchful eye of Randy WB4SPB while freezing their buns off at the FYBO Event at Owens Beach in February. (That's your illustrious editor W7MWF holding down the key so it doesn't get away from Bob)
Photo courtesy Jay KD7DKY

RCT Board Meeting
7 March 2012

The 7 March 2012 Radio Club of Tacoma Board meeting was held at the Radio Club of Tacoma. President Gary McAdams called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Officers and board members present:

President	Gary McAdams WG7X
Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Treasurer	Bob Purdom AD7LJ
Board Member	Crystal Quamme K7XK
Board Member	Al Ferguson N7OMS
Board Member	Glen Galati KA7BOJ

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes... There were 12 names on the attendance roster.

MINUTES: The minutes of the 1 February 2012 Board meeting as coordinated and corrected, were approved without objection.

HEALTH AND WELFARE: None reported

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Larry KD4VOM

Correspondence:

Membership renewals
Utility and Phone Bills
QSL Cards
Bank Statements

A copy of the current correspondence log is attached to the original copy of these minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT: No report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership: Karl K7KHJ

Memberships are delinquent on 31 March and only those who have renewed by then will find themselves listed in the annual membership booklet.

Karl noted that we ended the 2011 calendar year with 326 members, and so far this year renewals and lifetime memberships totals are looking good at 222.

There was a brief discussion of online/internet payment possibilities.

Larry KD4VOM provided a quick overview of the cost tradeoffs should we not meet the bulk mail minimum count. We currently pay 15 to 17cents per item on the some 300 plus membership mailings. If we don't reach the 280 count minimum we will pay the going first class rate which is around 44cents each.

Repeater Committee: -

Bob AD7LJ reports that Nick K7MO is purchasing parts for the repeaters.
K7MO's report from the previous Board minutes: The 147.38 repeater from Crawford Mountain is on the bench undergoing repairs and upgrades, including temperature compensating crystals and installation in a standard GE station cabinet, along with a new PL en/decoder and new Phase Lock Loop Exciter. An upgrade has been performed on the SCOM 5K Repeater controller.

The 145.21 repeater at the Channel 28 site remains in service but will also be upgraded with GE Master II equipment. 440 receivers will be installed on all repeaters for remote control.

Property Management: -

Rich KR7W presented the Property Management sale listing for Board consideration.

After considerable discussion on the pros and cons of several items on the list, a motion was made, seconded and passed to approve of all the items on the list except RCT # 3315, Line item 40 on the list; the Butternut HF6V antenna.

The discussion noted the need for an overall plan for the Club's HF stations, feed lines and antennas against which decisions like the retention or disposal of the Butternut antenna could be better understood and decisions made.

A copy of the Property Management list is attached to the original copy of these minutes.

Emergency Operations Plan:

Larry Watson KD4VOM reported that the revised EmComm Plan review suspense has passed and prompted no additional inputs or recommendations.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adopt the RCT Emergency Operations Plan as revised.

Training: Technician Class 10-12 February Information on the W7DK.org website.

Facilities Remodel Committee: Al N7OMS

Al reports installation of network outlet jacks has been completed in the Simmon's room.

RCT Information Technology Committee:–

Randy Myers WB4SPB submitted an RCT Information Technology Charter for review and discussion by the Board.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adopt Randy WB4SPB's Information Technology Committee Charter and appoint the IT Committee as selected.

The Charter establishes the IT Committee duties to:

- Establish the Club's existing inventory of hardware, software and networking assets
- Provide an assessment of the current hardware, software and procedures
- Research the Club's current and future Information Technology requirements and their relationship to the Club's RCT mission and goals
- Propose IT Operations and Procedures to insure asset security, information backup and accessibility to members.
- Provide or assign responsibility for ongoing maintenance and management of IT assets.
- Provide consulting services for special RCT projects
- Report committee activities and progress at least quarterly

Committee Members:

Andresen, David W7HTJ – Member
Ferguson, Al N7OMS – Board Liaison
Hatlestad, Don K7OG –Member
Morton, Stephen AD7AB – Member
Myers, Randy WB4SPB – Chair
Quamme, Andrew K7ASQ – Member

A copy of the RCT Information Technology Committee Charter is attached to the original copy of these minutes

Field Day Planning: No report.

W7DK Kirkreit Picnic: Casey WY7V Reports the Spanaway Park Shelter D has been reserved again for this year's picnic, which is scheduled for 9 June.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Emergency Power Generator Replacement: In Nick K7MO's absence, there was no report. The President will contact Nick and request a written report on the results of the Generator Committee by the next Board meeting.

RCT Bylaws Revision: Larry KD4VOM reported on the Bylaws revision process. The initial revision version has been circulated to the Board and Club program and activity managers. Several responses and recommendations received.

This is expected to be a lengthy process. The goal is to complete the Board's review and a draft to circulate to the membership during this year's election cycle.

Larry KD4VOM provided a brief overview of some of the proposed changes.

The Secretary requests inputs, responses, recommendations and changes be in writing; state the change (~~strike through~~ or added text) accompanied by the reason/explanation for the change.

Workshop Wednesdays: Al N7OMS indicates there is considerable support for the Workshop Wednesdays project, and they are considering several sessions during upcoming contests to train interested folks on the process of contesting and logging. One goal will be to help folks get ready for Field Day.

NEW BUSINESS:

Atlas 350xl Transceiver Power Supply Purchase: Several of the Club members coordinated the purchase of an Atlas 350xl power supply to work with our existing Atlas 350xl HF Transceiver 200 watt rig.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to reimburse Al N7OMS for the $ 60.00 purchase of the Atlas 350xl power supply.

Ladies Room Safe: An offer was made to remove the large old damaged four drawer safe from the ladies room. It has been in the way too long and serves no useful purpose.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the offer to remove the safe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mike and Key Hamfest: Larry KD4VOM solicited help in handing out flyers at this Saturday's Mike and Key Hamfest. Meet at 8:15 at the fairgrounds.

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

The ARRL RCT Original 1920 Charter document: Larry KD4VOM reported that the ARRL Charter certificate, which has been in storage to protect it from further sunlight deterioration, has in an effort to develop an enhanced copy, been photographed by Mike Elwell, K7GHW, and Bob AD7LJ has it to make a copy on a large format scanner. The goal is to create an enhanced photocopy that could be put back on the wall, while preserving the original out of the sunlight.

Security and Access: Bruce WE7P reports that the Alarm system code accesses have been brought up to date. The Secretary will provide the spreadsheet listing of those who have key box keys.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm

The RADIO CLUB OF TACOMA needs your donations...

IF YOU HAVE UNWANTED OR UNNEEDED AMATEUR RADIO OR RELATED EQUIPMENT DONATIONS PLAY A BIG PART IN FUNDING THE OPERATION OF RCT. PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING IT TO THE CLUB

If you have something to donate Contact Frank Palmer AC7JY, Property Management Team Leader

General Meeting
14 March 2012 MINUTES

The 14 March General Membership meeting was held at the Pierce County Library Administration Building. . Vice President Casey Hicks WY7V called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Officers and board members present:

Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Treasurer	Bob Purdom AD7LJ
Board	Al Ferguson N7OMS
Board	Glen Galati KA7BOJ

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes. There were 49 names on the attendance roster.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Was led by Vice President Casey WY7V

INTRODUCTIONS: Self introductions were completed and several visitors and guests were warmly welcomed.

ILLNESS OR SILENT KEY: Casey WY7V reported on Paul Amschler KE7WTK .

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Larry KD4VOM reported the usual correspondence;

QSL Cards
Membership Renewals
Bank Statements

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bob AD7LJ: The RCT Financial Reports are available for viewing by members

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Training: No Technician Class scheduled for April or May.

VE Program: John Clarke AC7WW

Seven Volunteer Examiners administered tests to four candidates Tuesday March 13, 2012 at the Radio Club of Tacoma Clubhouse. Eight elements were graded with three being passed.
Results of the session were two new technicians and one upgrade to General.

Thanks to the following VE's for their time and effort.

Steve, AD7VL	Jan, K7HTU
Jon, AD7AW	Rich, KK7VH
Bob, AD7LJ	Roddney, WV7O

The next monthly scheduled testing session will be Tuesday April 10, 2012.

Field Day: Al N7OMS reviewed planning for this year's Field Day… Still looking for someone to head up the 20 meter phone station. Al also announced that folks interested in practicing, or learning the Field Day logging and contact process please contact him.

RCT Picnic: Casey WY7V reminded all that the Spanaway Park Shelter has been reserved for the second Saturday in June.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mike and Key Hamfest: Larry KD4VOM Thanked all who helped hand out RCT Hamfest Flyers, and covered our Club Table at the Mike and Key Hamfest last Saturday.

Frank AC7JY reported on the success of the RCT Property Management sales at the Mike and Key Hamfest, and a special shout out to all the team who worked so hard to make it a profitable session…

RCT Emergency Operations Plan: Larry KD4VOM reports that the RCT Emergency Operations Plan has been coordinated revised was adopted at the March Board meeting. Next step will be an all hands meeting to present the plan, solicit participation and begin implementing the plan.

RCT Bylaws: The process of updating the Radio Club of Tacoma's Bylaws got underway recently and may be ready for membership review and decision during the fall election cycle

Microsoft's MicroHams Digital Conference: Coming up 31 March, $ 25.00 preregistered, $ 30 at the door.

Communications Academy: Coming up April 14th and 15th.

Extra Class: Steve AD7VL announced the Highline Club is holding an Extra Class using the Gordon West books. Steve has copies of the Gordon West Extra manuals for sale.

Mike W7XTZ: Solicited folks to sign up to provide meeting refreshments for next month

Wilcox Farm Easter Egg Hunt: Steve AD7VL announced that Wilcox Farms is hosting a kids Easter Egg hunt at their farms on 31 March from 10 to 4

PROGRAM: Frank AC7JY presented a series of three homebrew videos on tower and antenna raising…

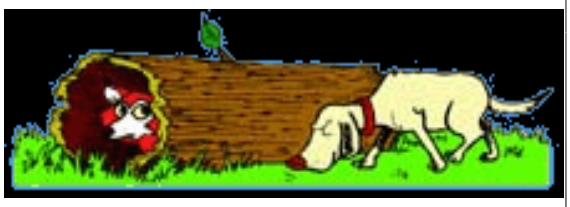
SHOW AND TELL: Lynn WR7G brought in a large "Outbacker" antenna made in Australia.

TUNING AND TRAFFIC: Lynn WR7G reports good Japan activity on 15 meters 7J7 call which is for an American citizen living in Japan, W7XTZ has worked him too.

DOOR PRIZES: "The Road Home" book was won by Bob Gates K7IND

RAFFLE PRIZE: A 1984 ARRL Handbook was picked up by Jim KE6WHN

Don't Forget the Foxhunt on Saturday, May 12. Event to be held near Silverdale, WA Check the club website WWW.W7DK.ORG for details



General Meeting
28 March 2012 MINUTES

The 14 March General Membership meeting was held at the Pierce County Library Administration Building. . Vice President Casey Hicks WY7V called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Officers and board members present:

Vice President	Casey Hicks WY7V
Secretary	Larry Watson KD4VOM
Board	Nick Winter K7MO
Board	Al Ferguson N7OMS
Board	Bruce Hanson WE7P

A sign in sheet with the names of members and guests is attached to the original copy of these minutes. There were 41 names on the attendance roster.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Was led by Vice President Casey WY7V

INTRODUCTIONS: Self introductions were completed.

ILLNESS OR SILENT KEY: None Noted

Chuck AC7QN working the voice bands at FYBO 2012 - *Photo courtesy Jay KD7DKY*

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Larry KD4VOM reported the usual correspondence;

QSL Cards
Membership Renewals
Bank Statements
Contest Journal
Experimenters Journal
Electric Radio
OARS Newsletter

TREASURER'S REPORT: .No report

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Training: No Technician Class scheduled for April or May.

RCT Picnic: Casey WY7V reminded all that the Spanaway Park Shelter has been reserved for the second Saturday in June.

Field Day: Al Ferguson N7OMS reviewed the current planning for this year's Field Day. The original Field Day manager is unable to continue, and several members have stepped up to help. Field Day still needs a 20 meter phone station captain, and N7OMS solicited volunteers to step up to handle:

- Friday; the Setup and security.
- Saturday Overview operations and security;
- Sunday teardown, return to storage and police up
- Jan K7HTU could use folks to sign up to help with the kitchen.

Randy WB4SPB announced that a couple of orientation/training sessions are planned with Joe K7ZG to help those who wish to learn the report-

ing and logging process. Randy will be helping folks learn the contesting and logging process during the Georgia QSO party on April 14th at the Clubhouse, and Joe K7ZG will be available to help new hams during the April 15th Rookie Roundup session. Both events will be conducted at the RCT Clubhouse.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Salmon Run Clean Sweep: Al N7OMS presented the Salmon Run Clean Sweep winner N7PP with the promised Coffee Mug carefully crafted by Mike K7XTZ and his XYL… Nice job to all.

Microsoft's Micro Hams Digital Conference: Coming up 31 March, $ 25.00 preregistered, $ 30 at the door.

Communications Academy: Coming up April 14th and 15th.

Wilcox Farm Easter Egg Hunt: Steve AD7VL announced that Wilcox Farms is hosting a kids Easter Egg hunt at their farms on 31 March from 10 to 4

Tripod/Pole sets:

PROGRAM: Frank AC7JY presented a series of "Go Kit" videos, and a bonus video of a Herman Munster Ham Radio operation…

SHOW AND TELL: None reported

TUNING AND TRAFFIC: None reported

DOOR PRIZES: Yeasu Hat won by Bob AD7WU

RAFFLE PRIZE: An SBE desk mike won by Jim KE6WHN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Peaks from the Past

Tidbits gleaned from past issues of The Loggers Bark
45 Years Ago at W7DK

March, 1967 - The six meter hunts in Tacoma are still going strong. They meet at the Club House at 8:00 pm on every other Friday. 51.0 is the Tacoma freq.

March, 1967 - Help us spread the word — it is NOT permissible for U. S. amateurs to communicate with any Vietnamese station. Some U. S. hams have been handling traffic for 3W8D against all International restrictions.

March, 1967 - Mens Bowling League - Max W7AEA took the honors for high game of 187 and Cliff W7MFG has high series of 467 for team number 2.

April, 1967 - The ladies aux. is going to have a bake sale right after the regular meeting. Come buy some cakes, cookies, fudge and pies.

April, 1967 - Two f.m. is coming alive and one needs a tuneable receiver to keep up with them. Listen for W7OS, who has a 5V and Doc will have it fired up soon.

April, 1967 - The Chief of Army MARS has announced that the "terms kilocycles per second and megacycles per second will continue to be used when expressing Army MARS frequencies", and "expressly forbids the use of the term 'Hertz'" in expressing frequencies.

April, 1967 - *From the Associated Press* - The Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission told a group of senior amateur radio operators tonight that they'd better attract more youth into the ham ranks or risk the loss of valuable space on the radio spectrum.

The Torch is Passed

The staff of the Bark wants to give special recognition to Rich KR7W. After 7+ years of creative and dedicated service he has relinquished the webgeek duties to Joe K7ZG. Thanks Rich, not only from me personally but from the rest of the W7DK family. Well Done! And best wishes to Joe for his willingness to step up to the plate to provide this needed resource.
Photo courtesy Jay KD7DKY

ANNUAL ARMED FORCES DAY CROSSBAND MILITARY/AMATEUR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS TEST

MAY 12, 2012

The Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard are co-sponsoring the annual military/amateur radio communications tests in celebration of the 62nd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day (AFD). Although the actual Armed Forces Day is celebrated on Saturday, May 19, 2012, the AFD Military/ Amateur Crossband Communications Test will be conducted 12 May 2012 to prevent conflict with the Dayton Hamvention (18-20 May 2012), which is the same weekend as the actual Armed Forces Day.

The annual celebration features traditional military to amateur cross band communications SSB voice and Morse Code tests. These tests give Amateur Radio operators and Short Wave Listeners (SWL) an opportunity to demonstrate their individual technical skills, and to receive recognition from the appropriate military radio station for their proven expertise. QSL cards will be provided to those stations making contact with the military stations.

MILITARY-TO-AMATEUR CROSS BAND SSB & CW TEST CONTACTS.

Military-to-Amateur cross band operations will take place on the dates/times in ZULU (UTC), and frequencies listed below for each station. Voice contacts will include operations in single sideband voice (SSB). Some stations may not operate the entire period, depending on propagation and manning. Participating military stations will transmit on selected Military MARS frequencies and listen for amateur radio stations in

the Amateur bands indicated below. The military station operator will announce the specific amateur band frequency being monitored. Duration of each voice contact should be limited to 1-2 minutes. The following stations will be transmitting on MARS frequencies listed below which are provided as "Window/Dial Frequency" in kHz.

Some stations will use CW to provide the opportunity to check in by Morse Code

For complete details on station locations, times, modes and frequencies, check the ARRL Website www.arrl.org.

This Month in Radio History

Happy 138th Birthday

Guglielmo Marconi

Born April 25, 1874

Bologna, Italy

Died July 20, 1937

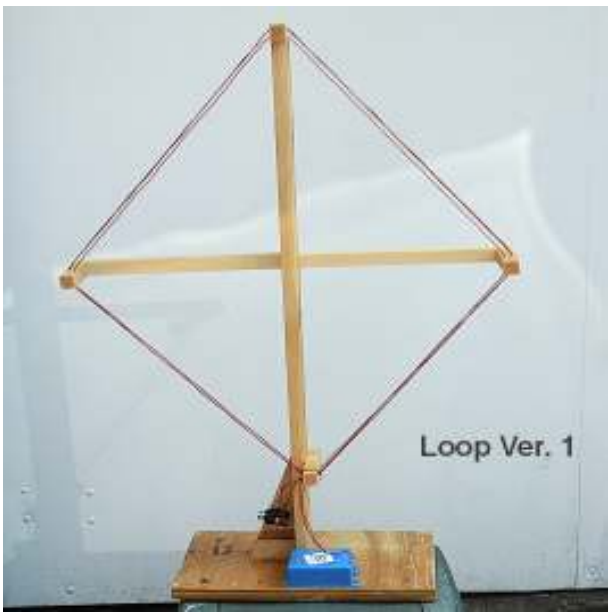
SHOW and TELL by: Rich kr7w

There are 732, 000 amateur radio operators in the USA… and I am one of them with a big noise problem. This is my story. I see S9+5db on the S-meter from 5.0 MHz to a bit less than 10 MHz. This pretty much wipes out 40 meters which is my favorite band to operate on.

I powered my ICOM Pro2 on a SLA battery to listen to the noise. At the AC power panel I shut off the BIG ONE, aka the 200 amp breaker. The noise didn't go away with the AC Power OFF. Darn it, Joe… it would have been pretty easy to find noise within my own QTH.

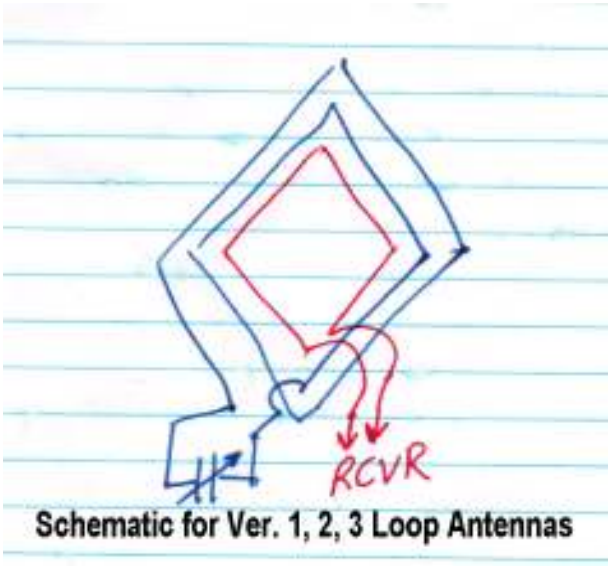
I buried my nose in the ARRL's RFI Book 2nd Edition to figure out how to find 7 MHz noise. One of the recommended methods is to use a portable loop antenna connected to a receiver to DF (direction find) the noise source. In addition to the RFI book I scoured the world wide web to find some other usable loop antenna designs. I ended up building three versions of loop antennas– two to find noise and one to eliminate noise.

Version 1 was built to be a table top kind of apparatus like shortwave receivers used in the late '20s and '30s. Ver. 1 loop sports two turns of #22 hook up wire on the scrap wood form. The wire ends connect to a variable capacitor to create a parallel tuned circuit. An additional turn of wire connects to the receiver input. The two coils of wire act like transformer windings.



Loop Ver. 1 made from scrap lumber, sheet rock screws, and scrap hook up wire.

What's that Joe? How do I know if the antenna is resonant? Well, in this case I used an old timey Grid Dip Oscillator. The GDO has a coil that couples to the antenna loop wires. The dial on the GDO is adjusted



Schematic for Ver. 1, 2, 3 Loop Antennas

until a dip is seen on its meter. Read the dial and it tells what the resonant frequency of the antenna or tuned circuit is. Or, set the GDO to the desired frequency and adjust the variable capacitor for a dip on the GDO. I would have used my MFJ-269 Antenna Analyzer, but it is broken– so the dark ages GDO is the next best thing. How do I know how many turns of wire to use? Trial and Error, Joe.

Once I had the loop antenna built… how do I use it? The book says the antenna is bi-directional like a dipole. There is a dull peak and another peak 180 degrees from the first peak. There is a very sharp null 90 degrees from the peaks. This sharp null appears again 180 degrees from the first null. The ARRL Antenna book shows this… but having not used an antenna like this before I was a bit confused. So I decided to generate my own signal and DF it.

Continued on next page...

In my ham shack I tuned my Pro2 rig to 7.001 MHz (CW band). I adjusted the radio to 0.7 watt output and connected a 20 dB attenuator between the rig and antenna. I plugged in my paddles and pushed my beer glass up against the dit paddle. The radio now is sending out a QRPp .007 watt series of dits. I connected the Ver. 1 loop antenna to my Icom handheld shortwave receiver and walked down the street a couple of blocks and DFed my own signal. This practice allowed me to get the hang of using the loop antenna and my SW radios RF GAIN and ATTN controls. I knew I was heading towards the signal source because the S-Meter was showing increasing strength from the dull peak side of the loop. Then I could determine direction to the signal with the sharp null side of the antenna. This took some getting used to as my other DF experience is looking for hidden transmitters with a Yagi where a sharp peak in signal strength is followed. I shut down the dits… I sent my call sign and went off the air.

Back outside I tuned my SW receiver to 7.100 MHz, the loudest noise I can hear and walked a block each direction from my QTH. I determined that the noise was loudest from the south- from either a vacant house or a power pole with cable TV equipment on it. Some success was achieved... time to retreat and finish the warm beer.

Using the ver. 1 loop was cumbersome to hold on to and rotate whilst using the SW receiver, so I decided to build a smaller antenna. Ver. 2 became more of a hand held wand modeled after 80 meter ARDF Antennas.

The next day, armed with Ver. 2, I walked past the first suspected noise location and ended up at the house on the corner as the source. Down the alley, up the street, from across the street… it pointed to that house on the corner. That's gotta be it, Joe! It was too much excitement for one day so I retreated for refreshments.

On Saturday, accompanied by Ms Pat WT7N, we went "out for a walk" with an old transistor SW radio that tunes the 7 MHz Shortwave band. I wanted to use this receiver because it is less sensitive and has a built in Ferrite Rod loop antenna which is quite directional. Standing across the street from the suspected noise house… I tuned the radio to 7 MCs and I hear single side band signals. What the ? SSB? Where'd the noise go Joe?

Back in the shack…I listen to the 40 Meter Band. Signals all over the place. Noise is S3 at the highest. I answer the CQ at the bottom of the band. KR7W de HT3TU. Wow Joe, It's back! I am in 40 Meter Nirvana. All day Sunday the loudest noise was S3. So, I wondered what the heck happened to make the noise go away? Did the neighbors see me and my wacky instruments that detect illegal activities and become paranoid enough to shut down their operation? Whatever that operation was… I don't wanna know as long as the noise is gone.

It's early Monday morning… and I am still wallowing in 40 meter Nirvana hoping to work some Asian or Russian DX on 7.009. Bummer! The noise is back. I wonder, does it take the weekend off? Idea! Another noise reduction solution came to me from ON4UN's Low Band DXing book. The author speaks of using larger (4-5 ft diameter) receive only loop antennas on the 40, 80, and 160 Meter bands. Since the loop has such a sharp null on two sides… it is possible to aim the null towards the noise and wipe it out. Of course this is too good to be true without giving something else up. With this method the noise is way lower but so are the desired signals. But in the long run the Signal to Noise (S/N) Ratio is way higher than using the same antenna for XMT+RCV. I know that my Pro2 radio has a separate RCV ONLY jack and can be mated with the (original) XMT antenna.

ON4UN's book was limited articles on building receiving loops… but the bibliography is full of referenced articles from QST, 73, and other communications journals. Searching on www.arrl.org/tis provided a number of articles by Doug DeMaw, W1FB who wrote a lot of great articles for beginners and QRP operators. Good stuff for DIYers.

My ver. 3 receive loop antenna is a composite of at least 3 different articles. This antenna is 4 ft in diameter and is made from a piece of 1/2" hardline coax. This antenna is a 'shielded loop' where the antenna coil (pick up) is shielded by the outer conductor of the coax. A smaller loop, whose length is 20% of the large loop is the impedance matching transformer winding that connects to the receivers input. It doesn't seem like it will work, but it does amazingly well.
Some receiving loop antenna articles tell the builder to make the length of the conductor no longer than .08 to .10 wavelength. I had a 11' piece of hard-line coax and that was right at 1/10 WL. The capacitor came

Continued on next page...

from an old broadcast receiver. Once I knew the antenna tuned at 7 MHz… I connected my Icom SW receiver and rotated the antenna for the least noise level. I screwed the wooden mast to the picnic table. A 30 ft jumper through the shack feed-thru made the connection to the rig.

Ver. 3 loop antenna. The inset shows the snapware container that contains the tuning capacitor.

I connected everything to the Pro2, switched to 40 meters, and lo and behold, Joe… no noise but lots of signals popping up on the spectrum scope. They are not huge signals, but they are easily heard because there is no noise. It's sort of like being out in the woods with my QRP radios. My first QSO was with a guy in Seattle.

And Joe, I am going to do more testing with my Ver. 2 antenna and the old SW receiver… then send my detailed results to the ARRL for them to analyze… as a member they'll do that for me. Maybe they can provide some advice on how to proceed.

Epilog: I am not done yet… Joe thinks I have left a lot of techy info out. OK, I probably have. But I think that if the reader is interested in building their own loop antennas as described in this article… then they will use the power of www.arrl.org/tis or Google and get the details for themselves. Thanks for your assistance, Joe. Best Regards, Rich KR7W –30-

Here's KR7W at the helm of the 40 meter CW station at W7DK's Field Day in 2006. It's about 6 AM and he's been up all night. So very cold. The message here is for all RCT members to be thinking how you are going to participate in 2012's FD. –30-

2012 ARRL Field Day - June 23 and June 24 - Steilacoom, WA

Save the date and make your plans to participate in the Annual ARRL Field Day June 23 & 24, 2012. This rip-roaring event will again be held adjacent to the grounds of Western State Hospital.

Setup begins Friday morning, June 22nd, and extra hands and strong backs are always welcome.

Be sure to check the RCT Website www.w7dk.org for the latest info, directions, events, and opportunities to assist in making this a memorable event.

This year's Field Day Chairman is Al N7OMS.

Dateline: March 2012

Sparky's "View from the Shack"

This and that around the club, and more.

Sparky's *welcomes comments, ideas and letters to "The RCT View", but reserves the right to procrastinate, and generally ignore social engineering or cranky inputs. Editorial philosophy — While there occasionally may be reason and rhyme as we go along, the goal is to ramble through the many and varied activities of the Club and its members as we take another trip around the sun.*

Around the Club...

Open House was busy on March 31st. Last Saturday, we had over 40 visitors for Open House, Dogs and Chili, and Mini Swap meet. The HF room was active on both SSB and CW, while the Museum was used by the team putting together an RCT Club equipment loan policy and procedure.

The Property Management Team was promoting sales and triaging various donations, while the kitchen crew served hot dogs, chili potato salad and the trimmings…

The Simmons room sports a new paint job and the clean looking molding is up. Thanks to KR7W, W7EP, KK7QW and I'm sure others I've missed. Looking good…

The roads and grounds crew began the summer lawn work, checking out the equipment and such.

Information Technology: Randy Myers WB4SPB has taken the reins of the IT Committee and provided the board with a well thought out plan of action to migrate us from the mish mash of computers, and software we have been struggling with to an evolutional improvement in hardware and software which should provide better service to the various club operations such as training, and administration. The IT group includes Don Hatlestad K7OG, Stephen Morton AD7AB and Al Ferguson N7OMS with the assistance of the Club Librarian, Museum Curator, The Club Secretary, Membership Database Manager, and other club managers. .

Emergency Operations: The Club Emergency Operations Plan Has been adopted by the Board, and work is underway to kick off the project with an all hands meeting this summer. Plans include establishing several teams to support the Plans stated goal of being able to provide ARRL NTS formatted Morale and Welfare message traffic in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Emergency Power: The Club's Generator committee has suffered from an Ice Storm, and multiple scheduling and work related conflicts.

Board Update: Board Members Paul Amschler KE7WTK and Crystal Quamme K7XK have regrettably tendered their resignations for personal reasons, and President Gary has appointed Bruce Hanson WE7P and James Mendenhall KE6WHN to serve the remaining term of their offices.

Field Day: At this writing several club members are picking up the planning work for this year's field day. Station captains and crews, equipment and shelters are beginning to fill out the voids, and the Field Day Kitchen is taking shape under the tutelage of Jan Gilbertson K7HTU.

To help those interested in getting some how to operate and log on Field Day, Randy Myers WB4SPB will be running a help session on April 14th using the Georgia QSO party — a great way to pick up some of those missing states. Joe Lester K7ZG and Mike Mikuchonis W7XTZ will be supporting the same orientation on Sunday April 15th during the Rookie Roundup contest.

SOLAR UPDATE:

Tad "Never did Sun more beautifully steep" Cook, K7RA, reports: Eight new sunspot groups appeared this week, but the average daily sunspot number declined four points to 71.1, while the average daily solar flux rose by less than two points to 103.7. On March 22, three new sunspot groups appeared, numbered 1441, 1442 and 1443. Two more groups appeared on Friday, 1444 and 1445, while 1442 vanished from view. On March 24, group 1441 disappeared, and on March 25 new group 1446 emerged. On March 26, groups 1440, 1443 and 1446 faded away, but 1442 -- not seen since four days earlier -- re-emerged. On March 27, group 1444 disappeared and 1447 appeared, and on March 28 new group 1448 arrived. For the short term, planetary A index is predicted to be 10 on March 29, 5 on March 30-April 9, then 12 on April 10, and back to 5 on April 11-12, then 15 and 10 on April 13-14, followed by 5 on April 15-23. The solar flux prediction shows flux values of 110 and 115 on March 29-30, 120 on March 31-April 2, 125 on April 3-5, and a big jump to 140 on April 6. On April 7-11, the predicted solar flux is 130, 125, 120, 110 and 105. On April 12-15, the predicted solar flux is 100. It then goes to 105 and 110 on April 16-17, and back to 100 on April 18-21. Another broader peak of 140 is predicted for May 1-3. Look for more information on the ARRL website on Friday, March 30. For more information concerning radio propagation, visit the ARRL Technical Information Service Propagation page.

Attaboys:

Sparky tips his hat to the Property Management Crew who gathered, priced, hustled to the Mike and Key Hamfest large quantities of our un-needed gear. They set up a set of tables and managed to bring in over $ 1,600.00 for the club treasury. Another thanks to the folks who handed out nearly a thousand Radio Club of Tacoma Hamfest flyers to the Mike & Key attendees early Saturday morning; Bob AC7LJ; Steve AD7VL; Karl K7KHJ, Gary WG7X, Steve K7SSS and Steve W7QLO… We thank too Greta KF7SKW and Bob N7NCP, Steve AD7VL, Harry W7HSA and Jim K7SSS for serving tours at our Club Table

Another shout out to Rich KR7W and Randy WB4SPB who have guided the Ninja CW

class for the past few months. The class has progressed steadily from learning the characters to conducting one on QSOs and now have moved the training operations to Monday night on line QSOs with the invaluable guidance and assistance of mentors Rich and Randy. We thank you for your time and talent.

Thanks too to the folks who helped us get the annual membership renewal notices out. To Karl K7KHJ, who manages our database and prepared the nifty new renewal forms and letters, as well as the folks who stuffed the envelopes for mailing; Greta , KF7KSW Steve , AD7VL Verna , KF7SCB Chris Johnson (son of Karl Johnson) Karl , K7KHJ and Gregg , KF7BAO

Sparky doesn't want to forget Andrew K7ASQ who put together this Years Freeze you Buns off Winter Field Day exercise, nor Randy WB4SPB and the crew that made Straight Key Night memorable...

View from the Shack.

Sparky's been a bit absent the past few months, but hopefully time will permit a regular article for the BARK.

Don't be shy about creating articles for the BARK yourself. There are folks who can help with the details, but just getting the ideas into words and adding a few photos can make our monthly record more interesting and useful.
Step up and get your own byline…
Maybe we'll "Friend" you, or "Like" you…

Sparky ***"Everyone seems normal until you get to know them…"***

The Disclaimer...

These articles are intended to browse through recent activities and coming events of possible interest to the Radio Club of Tacoma members. It will of course by design and intent be informal and attempt to record some of the Club's activities that might otherwise go unnoticed

LATE-BREAKING NEWS ITEMS

- Silent Key - We're saddened to learn that Charles Souter, KA7HJN of Bonny Lake, WA and Tyler, TX has become a Silent Key. Chuck had a long-time association with RCT, holding a membership number 1924.
- RCT Team places Second in New National Contest - In the first ever Multi Operator Category competition of the ARRL Rookie Roundup held April 15th, the RCT Team consisting of Mike Mikuchonis W7XTZ, Joe Winkler KF7PXB, Wayne Williams KF7SOV and Mike Finnie W7MWF took Second Place Honors. Joe Lester K7ZG organized the event locally and compiled the logs. Well Done guys!
- RCT again recognized by ARRL - The Radio Club of Tacoma W7DK has been named a Special Service Club for 2012. Clubs that go the extra mile to provide on-going training and support for the benefit of their community, fall into the Special Service Club category. Special thanks to Larry KD4VOM for his efforts on behalf of the club to maintain the records and submit the applications.

The Radio Club of Tacoma's

Logger's Bark

The Logger's Bark **is the *OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE RADIO CLUB OF TACOMA*… and is published by W7DK Press, PO Box 11188, Tacoma, WA 98411. The Radio Club of Tacoma is a non-profit corporation as defined by law, and all proceeds will be used exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. The Radio Club of Tacoma's Club House is located at 1249 Washington St, Tacoma, WA 98411, phone: 253-759-2040.**

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The Fine Print: The Logger's Bark is published once a month for the membership of The Radio Club of Tacoma or interested ham radio enthusiasts. The Bark is delivered by PDF file on the club's website: www.w7dk.org. If a condensed paper copy is needed… then let the Printer/Publisher listed above know.

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Membership Info: FULL (licensed) and ASSOCIATE (non licensed) is $30 per calendar year. $25 for Licensed Seniors (65 and over). Licensed family members at same address pay $15 each for the first two and are free for the third, fourth, and so on. Fulltime students, licensed or non licensed, up to age 25 are $15 per year. Note: fees are applicable for the calendar year: Jan to Dec. Lifetime membership is 20 times the yearly fee you are eligible for.. Lifetime memberships are calculated based on the FULL and ASSOCIATE rates.

Radio Club Repeaters

Central Tacoma: 147.280 + PL=103.5 Central Tacoma Packet: 144.970
Crawford Mountain (SE Thurston County): 147.380 + PL=103.5
Central Tacoma: 440.625 + PL=103.5

The Loggers Bark
Radio Club of Tacoma
PO Box 11188
Tacoma, WA 98411

To RCT Member:

May 2012 Events

CLUB MEETINGS: Second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Library Administration Building 112th and Waller Road. The club meets at 7:30 PM. Everyone is invited to attend.

Board Meeting: First Wednesday of the month at the RCT clubhouse. All members are welcome to attend .

Bark Deadline: Last week-end of each month. Please submit articles by that time!

Support our club: Attend meetings, volunteer, Elmer!

Check into the weekly two meter net: Tuesdays at 7:30 PM on the club repeater on 147.280 MHz

Check into the weekly 10 meter net: Sundays at 8:00 PM on 28.375 MHz .